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Security Council

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New York

President:	Mr. Owada	(Japan)
Members:	Bahrain	Mr. Buallay
	Brazil	Mr. Valle
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Costa Rica	Ms. Incera
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gabon	Mr. Dangue Réwaka
	Gambia	Mr. Sallah
	Kenya	Mr. Amolo
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	Slovenia	Mr. Türk
	Sweden	Mr. Dahlgren
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

The situation concerning Rwanda

98-85231 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.50 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Rwanda

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Belgium and Germany, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Reyn (Belgium) and Mr. Henze (Germany) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1998/306, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

Sir John Weston (United Kingdom): I have the honour to make the following statement on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia — and the associated country Cyprus, as well as the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) country member of the European Economic Area Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union expresses its concern at recurrent violence in Rwanda which is contributing to the persistent instability in the Great Lakes region as a whole. We unequivocally condemn the continued armed insurgency by elements with a genocidal motive, and in particular the acts of brutal violence perpetrated by such groups against unarmed civilians, including women and children.

In this regard, the European Union welcomes the action of the Security Council to reactivate the International Commission of Inquiry on illegal arms flows to Rwanda. In its new common position on Rwanda, adopted on 30 March, the European Union affirmed its support for the work of the Commission as an important means to help bring an end to the continuing destabilizing conflict. The member States of the European Union pledge their full cooperation in the work of the Commission in its new phase.

The European Union is committed to working together with the Government of Rwanda to secure an end to conflict and recovery from genocide, to promote national reconciliation and the democratic process, to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to foster economic prosperity in the country.

That concludes my statement on behalf of the European Union. I wish now to make a very short statement in my capacity as Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom.

I am pleased to announced today that the British Government will make a financial contribution of 100,000 pounds sterling to the Trust Fund supporting the International Commission of Inquiry for the next phase of its work.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Germany. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Henze (Germany): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, on your reassumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I am sure that the work of the Council will greatly benefit from your experience.

Germany fully subscribes to the statement made by the Presidency of the European Union. My Government welcomes the reactivation of the International Commission of Inquiry on illegal arms flows to Rwanda. We support its work as a means to curb the continuing violence in Rwanda, which is seriously affecting the stability of this country and of the Great Lakes region as a whole.

The illegal flow of small arms and light weapons is a serious obstacle to the lasting resolution of conflicts. The topic is of particular concern to my Government. We have been active in the General Assembly in addressing

this difficult issue, especially in the context of the General Assembly resolution "Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures", initiated by Germany.

Germany was actively involved in the work of the Commission of Inquiry in the past. A German expert was a member of the Commission from October 1995 to April 1996.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that my Government has decided to continue to support the Commission by granting $50,000 for the continuation of its work.

The President: I thank the representative of Germany for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Belgium. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Reyn (Belgium) *(interpretation from French):* I should also like to congratulate you, Sir, on your reassumption of the presidency of the Security Council.

My delegation would at the outset like to express its full support for the statement made by delegation of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union.

Belgium welcomes the reactivation of the International Commission of Inquiry, which is charged with investigating reports of the sale and supply of arms and related *matériel* to the former Rwandan government forces and militias in the Great Lakes region. There is no doubt that the free flow of arms jeopardizes the efforts under way to improve the social, economic and political situation in the region.

Arms trafficking is a destabilizing element in the Great Lakes region on which the international community can have an impact. We welcome the Security Council's action. Indeed, this action also shows the international community's growing determination to stop uncontrolled trafficking in small arms.

We hope that the International Commission will be able to complete its inquiry and to make specific recommendations to put an end to the illegal flow of arms into the region.

In the past, the importance my country attaches to the Commission's work was expressed by a contribution to the Trust Fund of approximately $100,000. My Government is now considering a further contribution to the Fund, the amount of which will be announced at a later time.

Belgium will continue to cooperate fully with the Commission in order to help in its inquiry.

The President: I thank the representative of Belgium for his kind words addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Ms. Soderberg (United States of America): Last night, there was a service at the United Nations Chapel commemorating the fourth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda. Four years ago, hundreds of thousands of Rwandans were brutally massacred, and still the violence continues. The United States remains extremely concerned about the continuing violence in the Great Lakes region and the renewed threat of genocide. A contributing factor has been the fluid traffic in small arms through the region.

In the aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and the international community's search for more effective responses, the Security Council established the International Commission of Inquiry into arms flows to Rwanda in 1995, which carried out its investigation through September 1996. Its final report came out just as the fighting began in the Rwandan refugee camps in what was then eastern Zaire.

The ground-breaking work of the Commission was overtaken by the dramatic events in the region, and the Council took no action on the Commission's reports and recommendations. One of those recommendations was to extend the Commission's investigation due to the nature of the information it had begun to document on the movement through the Great Lakes region of arms, funds and members of the former Rwandan government army and Interahamwe militia, many of whom were implicated in the genocide.

At the regional summit in Kampala two weeks ago, President Clinton and six Heads of State from the Great

Lakes region pledged to prevent a resurgence of genocide in Rwanda. The United States and these regional Governments affirmed their commitment to take concrete steps to combat the culture of ethnic violence that pervades Rwanda. The Kampala communiqué endorsed the reactivation of the International Commission of Inquiry on arms flows as a means to identify and to stop illegal arms trafficking to the former Rwandan army and militia forces. The United States will continue to work with all parties that recognize the necessity of a proactive front against a resurgence of genocide in the region.

Today's draft resolution enables the Commission to take up its work where it left off, to continue investigating the sale, supply and shipment of arms and related *matériel* to former Rwandan government forces and militias in Central Africa. Since 1996, the former Rwandan army and militias have dispersed widely throughout Central Africa and reportedly have forged new links with other insurgents in the region. The Commission will present recommendations to the Secretary-General and to the Council, with specific steps that could be taken to end the continuing illegal flow of arms and resulting violence.

The draft resolution calls upon all States, United Nations bodies and relevant organizations, including the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, to cooperate with the Commission as it pursues its investigation. It also urges their cooperation in countering hate propaganda, those publications and radio broadcasts that incite acts of genocide and violence in the region.

The efforts of the international community to assist the Commission are crucial to its ultimate success. The United States intends to contribute $100,000 to the United Nations voluntary Fund in support of the Commission's inquiry. We strongly encourage other States to contribute to this important endeavour and welcome the statements of support that we have just heard this morning.

The draft resolution the Council is endorsing today is a critical first step towards halting the violence in the Great Lakes region, but more will have to be done. We hope the work of the Commission and the subsequent reports by the Secretary-General will place the Commission's findings within a broader regional context and provide both accurate assessments and specific recommendations for further action. With the vital information the Commission can provide and the support of the regional and international community, we can begin to unravel the complex networks supporting violence in the region and work together for permanent solutions.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): My delegation concurs with the statement just made by the European Union Presidency.

Portugal fully supports the draft resolution before this Council and, in particular, its objectives. The Commission of Inquiry on arms flows in Rwanda stated in its latest report that the problems of the Great Lakes region must be approached from a regional perspective. In addition, it also recognized that the problems of one country in that region cannot be dealt with in isolation. Indeed, long-term stability in the region will prove impossible if the only action taken by the international community is a policy of containment.

We believe that these are fundamental facts. But the question remains, what is to be done next?

An important first step is to reactivate the mandate of the Commission as adopted by resolution 1013 (1995). As a matter of fact, Rwanda continues to face a wide range of problems, from an unstable security situation to the reintegration of a large number of refugees and overcrowded prisons. The ugly scars of genocide are still visible in Rwanda. Portugal believes that the ongoing but fragile process of national reconciliation requires the unequivocal support of the international community.

Another step to be taken would have broader implications in regulating the flow of small arms in the Great Lakes region. Of course, this is feasible only within a more comprehensive and global framework, not necessarily limited to that region in particular. In this context, let me welcome the recent African initiative on the control of light weapons. I am referring to the proposals and actions of President Alpha Oumar Konaré of Mali. The Oslo Conference, convened by both the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers and by the United Nations Development Programme, has also proven to be a significant contribution to the solution of this problem. My delegation firmly believes that this process should be deepened and enlarged.

The Portuguese delegation considers that this draft resolution, while seeking a formal reactivation of the International Commission, also constitutes an important signal of the interest and concern on the part of the United Nations towards the region. The pernicious flow of arms in the region may require from us all a careful analysis of the root causes of the current situation if we wish to find real solutions to those problems. In this regard, we also see the reactivation of the Commission as

designed to impress on those forces intent on undermining peace in the region that their actions will not be tolerated.

Finally, let me also underline the importance Portugal attaches to the call upon all States in the Great Lakes region to ensure that their territory is not used as a base for armed groups to launch attacks against any other State, in violation of the relevant provisions of international law. We believe that regional instability cannot be solved through military solutions. There is no alternative to genuine processes of national reconciliation.

Mr. Amorim (Brazil): Over the past few months we have been receiving repeated reports of persistent violence in some areas of the Great Lakes region, in particular Rwanda. In December 1997, in Mudende, a massacre of civilians, including refugees, shocked the world and showed that the cycle of violence in Rwanda was far from coming to an end. The ethnic conflicts have been fuelled by the illegal flow of arms that ravages this area.

The draft resolution on which we are about to vote reactivates the work of the International Commission of Inquiry on arms flows, originally created by resolution 1013 (1995).

The new mandate of the Commission, according to the draft resolution before us, would encompass information and investigation on the sale, supply and shipment of arms and related *matériel* to former Rwandan government forces and militias in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa. Additionally, the Commission would be requested to identify parties aiding and abetting the illegal sale to or acquisition of arms by former Rwandan government forces and militias. Finally, the Commission would make recommendations relating to the illegal flow of arms in the Great Lakes region.

In order to develop its work, the Commission will have to count on the cooperation of the Governments of the States concerned, of relevant United Nations bodies and of other organizations and interested parties.

This month the Council will examine the report of the Secretary-General on Africa. On that occasion, we will be able to discuss the root causes of conflicts in Africa, including the particular aspects involved in the Great Lakes region. It is to be hoped that this will afford the Council an opportunity to debate possible solutions for the structural problems that still beset many African nations.

Brazil understands that actions such as the one we are taking today represent an effective, if limited, contribution towards peace and security in the area.

Mr. Amolo (Kenya): The Kenya delegation joins the consensus in support of today's draft resolution, whose aim is to reactivate the International Commission of Inquiry on illegal arms flows to Rwanda. We do this in the belief that there are justifiable grounds to do so, namely to permit the Commission to follow up its earlier, inconclusive, investigations and to report to the Security Council on its findings with appropriate recommendations. We believe that the Commission should be able to complete all its investigations and other pending matters within the time-frame stipulated in the draft resolution, and to wind up its work.

We are, of course, aware that since the Commission's final report, submitted in November 1996, the situation in the Great Lakes region has assumed a new and more complex dimension involving a new theatre of activities and a wide range of players. The reality on the ground cannot be ignored, and it is our hope that any measures recommended by the Commission will be comprehensive enough to contribute meaningfully to the stabilization of the region and to finding a long-term solution to other problems which are fuelled by the proliferation of weapons.

Mr. Dahlgren (Sweden): Let me first say that Sweden concurs with the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union.

Sweden will vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Council today, which reactivates the International Commission of Inquiry which was established to investigate illegal arms flows to former Rwandan government forces in the Great Lakes region. We feel that the Commission did a commendable job during its first period of activity, often under very difficult circumstances, and it will have our full support as it resumes its investigations.

The destabilizing effect of the arms flows in the Great Lakes region as a whole remains an issue of great concern. Reactivating the Commission of Inquiry is one concrete step which the Security Council can take to deal with one of the causes of the continued instability in this region.

Sweden is deeply concerned at the continued violence in Rwanda, of which the massacre at Mudende last December was a particularly horrible example. Four years after the genocide in Rwanda, we, the international community, have a responsibility to do everything we can to help the Rwandan people recover from the genocide of 1994 and to prevent the resurgence of genocidal acts. We condemn all armed activities with such motives.

We hope that Rwanda will soon be able to move forward towards peace and national reconciliation, towards a democratic process, towards respect for human rights and towards economic prosperity.

Today's decision will be an important one. Let me conclude by expressing the hope that, when adopted, the draft resolution will be met by the necessary political will: the will to implement the existing arms embargo against the former Rwandan government forces; the will to cooperate fully with the Commission of Inquiry; and, in due course, the will to take the necessary steps in response to the recommendations the Commission will be asked to make.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): Unfortunately, violence and instability continue to affect the Great Lakes region. Civilian populations are terrorized, attacked and taken hostage. This climate of insecurity obstructs national reconciliation and jeopardizes economic reconstruction. Rwanda is a particular victim of these tragic events.

Illicit flows of weapons fuel and maintain the violence. In September 1995 the Security Council decided to establish an International Commission of Inquiry to investigate arms trafficking in violation of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. The Commission submitted three reports, but its activities were interrupted because of the tragic events in eastern Zaire. The persistence of armed action in Rwanda fully justifies the Commission's resuming its activities and making recommendations to the Security Council on measures that could be taken.

That is the thrust of the draft resolution on which the Council is about to take action; France will vote in favour of that text.

Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The draft resolution before us today is a very important one at this juncture: we are concerned at reports of the sale or supply of arms and *matériel* to former Rwandan government forces and militias, and at other reports of continued violence in Rwanda resulting from the illegal flow of arms of all kinds into Rwanda. This will inevitably place weapons in the hands of irresponsible parties, emboldening them and giving them the means to commit massacres, adding to the huge number of victims in Rwanda. That is exactly what happened last December, when this situation led to the murder of civilians, including refugees, at Mudende.

My delegation wishes to reaffirm the importance of reactivating the International Commission of Inquiry for Rwanda established by Security Council resolution 1013 (1995). We pay tribute to that Commission for its excellent work, which is described in its reports, especially its final report, contained in document S/1997/1010, and in the supplementary report annexed to the letter dated 22 January 1998 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, document S/1998/63.

The mandate of the Commission should consist of the following elements: gathering information and carefully examining reports of the sale or supply of arms and *matériel* to former Rwandan government forces and militias in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa; identifying the parties that have assisted and encouraged the illegal acquisition of arms, which contravenes relevant Security Council resolutions; working to put an end to radio broadcasts and pamphlets that spread hatred and sow fear among the population of the region; and recommending the necessary measures to stop illegal flows of weapons to the region. In this respect, we request the Secretary-General to provide us with periodic reports on the reactivation of the Commission and to introduce his recommendations in this regard. The International Commission of Inquiry must commence its work as soon as possible.

My delegation supports the draft resolution before us today and will vote in favour of it.

Mr. Türk (Slovenia): Slovenia supports the draft resolution submitted to the Security Council for action today. It is a timely and necessary draft resolution. The situation in the country and in the Great Lakes region as a whole continues to give rise to concern.

Furthermore, the work of the International Commission of Inquiry on arms flows, established by Security Council resolution 1013 (1995), has not yet been finished. We would like to commend the delegation of

the United States for the good work done in preparing the draft.

The reactivation of the International Commission of Inquiry on illegal arms flows to Rwanda reflects the willingness of the Government of Rwanda and of the international community to prevent violence in that country. The memories of massacres of civilians, including refugees, and acts of violence in the Great Lakes region are still fresh. The recurrence of violence in Rwanda is contributing to the persistent instability in the Great Lakes region as a whole. It is necessary that all efforts be made to put an end to all forms of insurgency and violence.

Recovery from the consequences of genocide, restoration of stability and security in the country and in the region, national reconciliation and democratization are fundamental for economic development and, in particular, for the creation of a climate conducive to the harmonious reintegration of the refugees in order to encourage their return in safety and dignity.

The Commission's recommendations relating to the illegal flow of arms in the Great Lakes region will provide essential input for further action by the Security Council. The appeal to other United Nations bodies, other organizations and interested parties to collate information in their possession relating to the Commission's mandate and to make this information available are therefore necessary.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The illegal flow of arms has already seriously undermined the security and stability of Rwanda and the whole Great Lakes region, and also created a tragedy in which many people were killed. The international community should adopt precise measures to curb this flow. The reactivation of the International Commission of Inquiry is one measure for prohibiting the provision of arms to the former Rwandan government forces. Given the interests of the parties concerned and the need to maintain security in the area, China feels positively about the resumption of the work of the Commission. The Commission did a great deal of work in the past and put forward some recommendations. We express our appreciation for this.

The draft resolution before us today is very important. China hopes that this draft resolution can lead the Commission, on the basis of its investigations, to make effective and feasible recommendations to the Security Council so as to ensure that the provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions can be effectively implemented.

The successful implementation of the Commission's mandate depends to a large extent on the support and cooperation of the countries concerned. We hope that the Commission can conduct close consultations with the countries concerned and also hope that the countries in the Great Lakes region, along with other interested countries, can provide information and the necessary assistance to the Commission.

Curbing the illegal flow of arms requires the adoption of effective measures by the countries concerned and an integrated approach. We hope that all the countries concerned will make vigorous efforts in this regard.

Mr. Dangue Réwaka (Gabon) (*interpretation from French*): The persistence of armed conflicts in the Great Lakes region, particularly in Rwanda and Burundi, in our opinion justifies adopting any measures that could restore peace and confidence there.

Thus, the draft resolution under consideration, which would reactivate the International Commission of Inquiry on arms flows in Rwanda, is a clear sign of the will of the Security Council to arrest the phenomenon of illegal arms transfers in this particularly unstable region.

Indeed, it is important to do all we can so that the illegal transfer of large quantities of arms to the countries of the Great Lakes region — in flagrant violation of the embargo imposed by the Council — will not continue to encourage armed violence, in Rwanda in particular.

Given the excellent work done by the International Commission of Inquiry established by resolution 1013 (1995), it would be wise for the Council to again avail itself of the Commission's expertise. This would make it possible to achieve at least two essential objectives. First, the offenders could be identified and a record drawn up of all violations of the Security Council resolutions imposing the embargo on arms traffic with Rwanda. Secondly, the information and disclosures provided could encourage the Council to adopt effective measures to combat the illegal flow of arms to this already very fragile subregion.

In this context, the work of the International Commission of Inquiry could make an effective contribution to stemming a massive arms build-up in

Rwanda and thereby help prevent the outbreak of new widespread conflicts in the region.

For, beyond the issue of illegal arms flows to Rwanda and to the Great Lakes region as a whole, the work of the Commission must be seen as a stage in an overall process to restore a lasting peace in the entire Great Lakes region.

This is why the Council, concurrently with the Commission of Inquiry's investigations, should continue its efforts to find concrete solutions to the basic problems that underlie the political instability in this region.

It is our belief that, as long as we have not found the ways and means to renew the political dialogue among all the parties, the chances of building a lasting peace among the countries of the Great Lakes region in general will remain extremely slim.

It is in this spirit that my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Sallah (Gambia): The situation in Rwanda is one of the saddest in that troubled African region. The long duration of the fighting in Rwanda has already claimed too many lives and left a substantial number of other persons internally displaced and an even greater number seeking refuge in neighbouring countries.

International efforts to solve the problem and to bring peace to the region are still proving elusive. My delegation wishes to commend all those Governments and international organizations that participated in the search for peace in the Great Lakes region, particularly in Rwanda.

The situation in Rwanda is undoubtedly a threat to peace and security in the region. As such, coordinated international action is required to alleviate the suffering of the Rwandan people and to help restore peace in Rwanda.

My delegation believes that the people of Rwanda bear the ultimate responsibility for national reconciliation and the reconstruction of their country. The Government of the Gambia is, however, deeply disturbed by the magnitude of the human suffering caused by the conflict. We are also deeply concerned at the reports of continuing systematic, widespread and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law in Rwanda. The victims of conflicts of this nature are often innocent civilians, including women and children.

It is in realization of this fact, and because of the responsibility to ensure the maintenance of peace and security the world over, that the Security Council and the international community took steps to restore peace in Rwanda. But ending a war is not easy, let alone one in which the parties have easy access to war-making materials.

In order to stem the flow of such war-making materials to the warring parties, the Security Council, by its resolutions 918 (1994) of 17 May 1994, 997 (1995) of 9 June 1995 and 1011 (1995), of 16 August 1995, placed an arms embargo on Rwanda and on the warring parties. Notwithstanding this move, arms continued to flow into Rwanda as the relevant resolutions were violated with impunity. This state of affairs necessitated the establishment of the International Commission of Inquiry, with the mandate to collect information on the sale or supply of arms and related *matériel* to the warring parties in violation of the resolutions.

The International Commission of Inquiry did an excellent job in the discharge of its mandate. In its three reports, it amply and ably catalogued the sources of arms flows in Rwanda. My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to commend the members of the Commission for the work they have done.

The letter of the Secretary-General dated 22 January 1998 addressed to the President of the Security Council, contained in document S/1998/63, clearly indicates that the Commission did not finish its work. The Commission also indicated in its report its desire to obtain information from certain Governments in order to bring its investigation to a successful conclusion.

The flow of arms in the Great Lakes region, and in Rwanda in particular, continues to be a major cause of concern. It is imperative, therefore, that the International Commission of Inquiry be renewed so that it can carry on its unfinished work. The draft resolution under consideration would do just that. The Commission's mandate is to collect information and investigate the supply of arms to former Rwandan government forces, identify the parties involved and make recommendations relating to the illegal flow of arms in the Great Lakes region.

My delegation believes that the reactivation of the International Commission of Inquiry would contribute positively to ending the persisting conflict in Rwanda and the illegal flow of arms in the entire Great Lakes region.

The success of the Commission would, however, depend on the cooperation of those States concerned in which the Commission will carry out its mandate.

While my delegation fully supports the draft resolution under consideration, the Government of the Gambia would like to urge the Governments of all those States concerned to cooperate fully with the Commission in the discharge of its mandate and also to honour their obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Ms. Incera (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation is pleased to support this draft resolution on the reactivation of the International Commission of Inquiry into the flow of arms in Rwanda. It is undeniable that the illegal flow of arms to the Great Lakes region lends itself to civil violence and acts of genocide. The massacre of civilians and refugees in Mudende, which occurred in December 1997, shows the need for clear and resolute action by the Security Council so as to ensure the full implementation of the arms embargo that it imposed on Rwanda. In this context, we believe that the work of the Commission of Inquiry is highly constructive.

Costa Rica condemns the continuing sale and supply of arms to the forces of the former Government of Rwanda and to other militias in the region, as well as the training of new militias. We also condemn fund-raising to finance the military efforts of such militias, as well as the recruitment of refugees to these forces. In addition, we view with profound concern the increased coordination and cooperation among the various insurgent forces in the area. We hope that the International Commission will identify those responsible for these violations of the sanctions imposed by the Security Council and of the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Infiltrations and flows of arms and combatants in the various countries of the area endanger international security. Cooperation among all the States of the region is indispensable if peace is to be achieved. In this context, we hope that all States, in the Great Lakes region and in the rest of the international community, will cooperate to the best of their ability with the Commission of Inquiry. We also hope that all States will ensure that their territories are not used for arms trafficking and that they will not allow illegal forces to organize their activities there.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to express its complete readiness to consider favourably the recommendations that the Commission may make to this Council.

Mr. Fedotov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian Federation notes with satisfaction that the situation in Rwanda has stabilized to some extent. The Rwandan people, after suffering the horrors of genocide, are slowly but surely returning to normal life. We also attach great importance to the swift, final normalization of the situation in the Great Lakes region as a whole, without which it would be difficult to achieve a lasting stabilization of the situation in Rwanda and in the surrounding region.

An important element in strengthening security in the region is the establishment of a lasting barrier to the illegal flow of arms that could fuel a new spiral of bloodshed. We continue to be concerned by information about arms flows to the forces of the former Rwandan regime, in violation of the embargo imposed by the Security Council in resolutions 918 (1994) and 1011 (1995). Given the continued seriousness of this problem, we support the reactivation of the work of the International Commission of Inquiry, which, we believe, is essential to deter political and ethnic extremism in the region.

The Russian delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Japan.

At the outset, let me express, on behalf of the delegation of Japan, my sincere sympathy to the people of Rwanda, who continue to experience grave hardship and suffering in the aftermath of the genocidal violence that swept through their country in 1994. We in the international community are very conscious that the response of the international community was inadequate in coping with the tragic situation that befell the innocent Rwandan people. It is Japan's firm conviction that the international community, and the Security Council in particular, should never again allow such atrocities to be committed in Rwanda or, indeed, anywhere else.

In this context, it is a source of grave concern to us in the international community that the illegal flow of arms into Rwanda, in violation of the embargo imposed by the Security Council in resolutions 918 (1994), 997 (1995), and 1011 (1995), and throughout the Great Lakes region, would appear to be increasing to a critical level.

If this flow of arms across Rwanda's borders and into the hands of former government forces, militias and other elements is left unchecked, there is a real danger that the old enmity which still remains within the population could find its outlet in an open confrontation, leading to a resurgence of armed conflict and seriously destabilizing the entire Great Lakes region.

The draft resolution before us attempts to address the problem of how effectively to prevent this by reactivating the International Commission of Inquiry. As Chairman of the sanctions Committee under Security Council resolution 918 (1994) on Rwanda, I welcome this decision. I believe the activities of the Commission will be crucial in shedding light on the situation, thereby helping the Council to determine just what concrete measures it could take to stem the illegal flow of arms in the region. The information it will gather can also be useful to the various United Nations organizations and agencies working to prevent a resurgence of violence in Rwanda and the Great Lakes region.

At the same time, my delegation finds it judicious that this draft resolution takes a carefully balanced approach, allowing the Commission to present to the Council its recommendations on measures related to the illegal flow of arms without actually expanding the Commission's mandate itself. For these reasons, my delegation will vote in favour of this draft resolution.

I wish to take this opportunity to state Japan's belief that the international community should seriously consider the overall question of how to address the illegal flow of arms. Naturally, in view of the complex and sensitive nature of this issue, I should stress that it must be approached with utmost care, most appropriately, perhaps, within the context of our efforts to build a comprehensive framework for preventive strategy.

In closing, I should also like to state that the Government of Japan has contributed $40,000 to the Trust Fund to support the Commission's activities, in the belief that they will make a significant contribution to the further stabilization of Rwanda and to the enhancement of regional peace and security.

I hope that all United Nations Member States, and particularly those in the Great Lakes region, will extend their full and active cooperation to the Commission as it carries out its important work.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1998/306.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bahrain, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, France, Gabon, Gambia, Japan, Kenya, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1161 (1998).

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.